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Garnett, in his *Life of Carlyle*, p. 69, introduces the following quotation [!] from *Faust*:

Ich sitz' an die säuselnde Webstuhl der Zeit
Und wirke des Gottes lebendiges Kleid.

Even the *Nation*, in its review of "Pickett and his Men," August 21, 1913, murdered a famous line in Wordsworth and thereby murdered also the review itself. The poet wrote:

Whom neither shape of danger can dismay
Nor thought of *tender* happiness betray.

Whereas the reviewer makes it "*sinful* happiness"! Poor Pickett must have turned in his grave.

When Kittredge's critic writes glibly of "philologist," "linguistic science," "the present sterilizing divorce of philology from general ideas," he makes one feel that he knows nothing of philology or linguistic science or general ideas; in modern philology and linguistic science there are many general ideas which he would be quite unable to grasp. In general, the *Nation* reviewer is a man who wishes Kittredge to be something different, something more like himself, ready to sacrifice fact to style.

Were the *Nation* an ordinary periodical, one might ignore its aberration. But in its rôle of universal arbiter it should measure out justice. We have a right to demand of it philosophic moderation. We grow weary of this persistent sneering at the Ph.D., at research, we yearn for less of platitudinous "culture."

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MOLIÈRE EN ANGLETERRE 1660-1670, par J. E. Gillet;
Paris: Honoré Champion, 1913; pp. 240.

This reprint from the publications of the Royal Academy of Belgium adds to the long series of treatises on Molière's influence upon English comedy a contribution that has little of novelty, but is amply justified by its consistent scholarly attitude and the finality of treatment given to its limited field. It invites comparison with the recent work of Dr. D. H. Miles, *The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy*, although the two studies are essentially different in their angle of approach, the extent of the material considered, and the type of reading public to which they are directed. The later book might better have antedated the other, as its author suggests: "Il fallait étudier Molière en Angleterre avant d'étudier l'Angleterre sous l'influence de Molière." It makes no pretense to other than a severely technical interest, avoids large generalizations, and keeps strictly to its ideals of accuracy and completeness within its prescribed limits.

In a subject upon which so much scholarly research has been expended, the student is naturally first concerned with the history

and results of that scholarship. Mr. Miles, frankly dependent upon the labors of his predecessors and willing enough to acknowledge obligations, was criticised somewhat for his failure to indicate in any systematic way the genesis of this phase of Molière investigation. M. Gillet, in addition to the carefully compiled lists of primary and secondary sources in his appendix, devotes ten pages of introduction to an analysis of preliminary work on the subject, and then discards the secondary sources altogether, giving his entire attention to a first-hand study of twelve English plays in the first decade after the Restoration, more or less clearly marked by the influence of Molière.

Of M. Gillet's elaborate presentation of detail there can be only unqualified commendation. It is certainly adequate; frequently more than adequate. Every assumption of parallelism in the body of the book is substantiated in the fifty pages of parallel texts found in the appendix. Matters of biography, stage history, and critical comment are presented in the same thoroughgoing fashion, even when their connection with the immediate problem is not particularly apparent. It is difficult, for example, to explain the advisability of outlining, for each play discussed, all available critical dicta from Dryden and Pepys to Professor Gosse and the *Dictionary of National Biography*. The attention of a reviewer may be directed more profitably to certain generalizations on which there is considerable current controversy, with the two latest "Molierists" by no means in agreement.

Mr. Miles maintained, with a somewhat unfortunate display of evidence, the conventional theory of a distinct gulf—moral, social, and literary—between the Restoration court and the populace. The playhouse audience he considered homogeneous, but only because this populace had no representation in it. The European author denies this emphatically (p. 16), insisting that the king understood his people and maintained himself in their good will despite all his excesses; and that the populace of the city was corrupt only in a less degree than the court. Although he feels compelled at once to qualify these statements with a group of possible exceptions, his position is only strengthened in the process, for every addition to our knowledge of the Restoration public increases the impression of its complexity and removes it farther from the possibilities of categorical treatment. Pepys has testified frequently enough to the popularity of playhouses among the citizens, and the emulation of courtly excesses by gay young clerks. The variety of Elizabethan plays revived, and the various things perpetrated upon them in these revivals, as well as the diversity of critical opinions expressed in the period, serve to indicate that Restoration England, moved by the curiosity which M. Gillet notes as her really dominating characteristic, was all things to all men until such a time as fixed national traits could once more assert themselves.

The national literary tradition, though, had not been broken. On this point both our authors seem to have been unnecessarily strict, in their zeal for the French influence which was their chief concern.¹ M. Gillet takes particular pains to confine this national tradition to the humor comedies of Jonson, whom he recognizes as dividing with Molière the formative responsibility for later English comedy. It is difficult, however, to improve upon the soundness of Professor Nettleton's position, several times reiterated in his recent *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century*: "Blurred and imperfect as was the Restoration vision, it was never blind to Elizabethan achievement. The interregnum had weakened, but not broken, the continuous chain of English drama" (p. 36).

According to Mr. Miles (p. 61f.), "the two men who introduced the influence of Molière into Restoration comedy were Sir George Etherege and William Wycherley." M. Gillet allows full credit to Etherege, as an initiator if not as a permanent source of influence. Wycherley, whose first contribution falls out of his period anyhow, he disposes of summarily. He "appartient notoirement à un groupe autre que celui des *importateurs*" (p. 10); the really significant figure in grafting the delicate human sympathies of Molière upon the traditional abnormalities of Jonson was Thomas Shadwell, whose *Sullen Lovers* was first acted in the spring of 1668.

"La première pièce de Shadwell fut reçue avec bienveillance, mais la vogue de l'auteur ne fit que croître dès ce moment, en même temps que se reformait la conscience nationale. Sans Shadwell le mouvement moliériste eût probablement cessé en même temps que l'engouement pour la France. Heureusement le disciple de Ben Jonson sut incorporer à l'oeuvre de Molière un élément de la tradition indigène. On ne reconnut pas Alceste et Oronte, Philinte et Pan-crace sous leurs habits anglais et on les accueillit comme des compatriotes" (p. 80).

While the interpretation of Restoration comedy as the resultant of two forces—the native influence of Jonson and the foreign one from Molière—has in it nothing of novelty, M. Gillet gives a new turn to the conception through this significance attributed to Shadwell. His treatment is as convincing here as in the more mechanical portions of the book, and leaves one with the feeling that the slight construction he has attempted for his large accumulation of fact is as reliable as it is cautious.

After all, however, it is not as critic or interpreter, but as a research scholar, that M. Gillet has approached his carefully defined task, and the results of his investigation are presented with a clearness and completeness that leave little to be desired.

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¹ Miles, p. 59: "This spirit of reaction, furthered by a genuine liking for French taste, was in the drama tempered by the force of no strong national literary tradition." But cf. p. 220: "It may be admitted at once that the